2.50 crore has been proposed for the scheme. Besides the National Minorities Development and Finance Corporation (NMDFC), an apex Corporation, has been established in 1994 to promote economic and developmental activities for backward sections amongst minorities. An outlay of Rs. 175.00 crore has been proposed for the Ninth Plan, Rs. 40.00 crore has been proposed for 1997-98.

Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995

565. SHRI V. PRADEEP DEV : Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995 does not cover several disabilities that exist in India and which require attention of the Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the N.G.Os. dealing with the disabled in the country have submitted a memorandum to Government for implementation of the Act into to;

(d) if not, the grievances of the Non-Governmental Organisations in this regard; and

(e) the steps Government propose to take in the matter ?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA) : (a) to (e) Representations have been received from Organisations representing different areas of disability, suggesting certain amendments in the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995

The suggestions include incorporating more measures welfare, as well as for inclusion of additional disabilities. As the Act has been brought on the Statute Book only recently, it is premature to consider any amendments to its existing provisions at this stage.

[Translation]

Price of Urea

566. SHRI DATTA MEGHE :
SHRI RAMASHRAYA PRASAD SINGH :

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to increase the price of urea; and

(b) if so, reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (EXCLUDING THE DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING) (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. It has become necessary to reduce the imbalance in the application of NPK nutrients.

[English]

Open Market Sale of Wheat

567. SHRI JANG BAHADUR SINGH PATEL : Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state :

(a) the names of the traders of Delhi to whom the FCI had allotted wheat for free-sale in the open market and for atta during April to December, 1996 indicating the quantity and rate of wheat allotted to them;

(b) the details of the irregularities noticed in the allotment of wheat for free sale and sale of atta; and

(c) the action taken/proposed to be taken against the traders found involved in the irregularities ?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV) : (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the House.

Non-Forest Activities in Forest Areas

568. SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN :
SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE :

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the consequences of the interim order issued by the Supreme Court recently directing the State Government to stop all non-forest activities including mining in forest areas–leading to closure of a number of small scale industrial units and mines etc.; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ) : (a) and (b) The matter is sub-judice as it is still being heard in the Hon'ble Supreme Court.

Exclusion of Income Tax Payers From P.D.S.

569. SHRI HARIN PATHAK :
SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA :

Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government has announced the new

PDS Scheme;

(b) if so, the details of the scheme;

(c) whether the people living above poverty line including income tax payers are being totally excluded from the purview of the new PDS;

(d) if so, whether any State has opposed this scheme;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) the reaction of the Government thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Government has decided to streamline the Public Distribution System (PDS) with focus on the poor. Details of the scheme are as under :

(i) All families living Below the Poverty Line (BPL) shall be provided with 10 kgs. of foodgrains per month per family at about half the Central Issue Price.

(ii) Identification of population below poverty line shall be taken up by State Government/UT Administrations on the basis of provisional estimates of below poverty line population worked out by the Planning Commission for 1993-94 adopting the methodology of the Expert Group under the Chairmanship of Late Prof. Lakdawala.

(iii) The average lifting of foodgrains for the last 10 years by the States is proposed to be confined for the benefit of the population Above the Poverty Line, at present getting the benefit of the P.D.S. The quantity of foodgrains and of this average lifting which is in excess of the requirement for the population Below Poverty Line is proposed to be allocated to States as a transitory allocation at the Central Issue Price.

(iv) The State Governments/UT Administrations will have to ensure fool-proof identification of poor, delivery of foodgrains to Fair Price Shops (FPSs) for distribution to the poor in a transparent and accurate manner.

(v) Specially subsidised foodgrains will be issued also to all beneficiaries under the Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS)/Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY) at the rate of one kg. per man day.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) to (f) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Use of Hindi

570. SHRI JAGDAMBI PRASAD YADAV : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the modern gadgets such as computer, telex, teleprinting etc. installed in the Ministry in Roman Script are being converted into bilingual ones;

(b) if so, the manner in which these bilingual gadgets would be put into use by the Ministry;

(c) the manner in which the use of Hindi will be promoted;

(d) whether the Ministry has given exemption for use of Hindi to their offices located in Region 'A' where work has to be done cent percent in Hindi; and

(e) if so, the reasons for giving such an exemption?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ) : (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The mother board of various computers, electronic typewriters etc. are supplied with bilingual keys. Several software packages, both bilingual and in Hindi exclusively, are also available, thus increasing working in Hindi.

(d) and (e) No, Sir.

[English]

Smuggling of Arms, Explosives and Narcotics

571. SHRI NAMDEO DIWATHE : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether incidence of trafficking in arms, explosives and narcotics along the Pakistani borders and Western Coast have increased recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken to deal with the problem and strengthen the vigilance on the western coast during the last one year;

(d) whether the problem has been discussed with the neighbouring countries; and

(e) if so, the outcome thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MOHD. MAQBOOL DAR) : (a) and (b) The smuggling of arms and narcotics has shown a decreasing trend across the Indo-Pak border whereas smuggling of explosives has increased as in 1996, 111 kgs. of RDX was seized compared to 30 kgs. in 1995. On Western Coast also, though one boat with some arms was seized but there are no reports of increasing trend.

(c) Following steps have been taken to strengthen the Indo-Pak border and western coast :